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MEMPHIS AND YELLOW FEVER

The following comments upon the sanitary condition of Memphis, United States, which we extract from the New York *Evening Post* of December 5, were made by a prominent physician of New York who visited that city in November last in connection with the national board of health. This national board was composed of the most experienced physicians, sanitary and civil engineers in the country, went to Memphis to study the causes of yellow fever in that city and to ascertain what measures could be taken to banish from it that terrible plague which had visited it with such fatal results in the last two summers. The results of this official inquiry have already been published and the recommendations made will be carried into effect during the present winter. The following discussion does not form a part of the report; it is the intelligent comment of one of the visiting physicians whose experience and high standing entitles his observations to a thoughtful consideration.

The natural advantages for drainage in Memphis are excellent—better than those of New York. It should be one of the best drained cities in the country, whereas it is not drained at all. Every one knows that it sits on a bluff which slopes down to the Mississippi river on one side and to the gulf stream, the Bayou Gayoso, on the other. This Bayou Gayoso is blamed for all the sickness that has occurred in that city; for there is thrown garbage and all conceivable species of filth; but there are miniature Bayou Gayosos in almost every street, alley and byway in Memphis which are infinitely more detrimental to the public health than the Bayou Gayoso. The Bayou Gayoso could easily be sewer'd and drained just like our covered sewers, its sides grassed and sloped, and then it would be an ornament rather than an offence. Memphis is dirtier than I ever heard or dreamed of—dirtier than Havana, which is saying much. The only redeeming feature is that they have thrown the swill and garbage into the river since the frost has touched the city. But all the rest of the filth goes into the streets, which are never swept.

The greatest and most disgusting sanitary defect is that the large stores of the city, which can be counted by the hundreds, have no proper closets at all, but simply provide as substitutes pits in the cellars. From one to four such pits can be found in hundreds of the larger stores. Over many of the stores people live. The blocks of ground on which the stores stand are completely covered by the buildings, and this, I suppose, was the reason why the cellars were used in this manner. From the cellars arise the disease-generating odors which fill the buildings and come out through the sidewalk gratings, staining the finger of death in the faces of passers by. These stores and wholesale establishments are owned, of course, by the largest capitalists and property-holders—the rich men—of the city. They are the great cause of the epidemic. One man owns some of the largest stores in the city in the cellar of which are a number of these pits. He has no sanitary arrangements even in his private home. He owns hundreds of negro shanties which rent from \$1 to \$5 a month, and are absolutely destitute of sanitary provision. He is probably worth more than a million of dollars. The filthiness and meanness of such men in great part brought the plague upon Memphis. These are the causes of the sickness.

The usual position for the vaults for private houses with grounds is twenty or thirty feet away from the wells. Soakage takes place, and the contaminated well water is always used for cooking and washing and often for drinking. The city has inadequate water works to convey some of the splendid water from the Wolf river to the city, but there are no sewers and no closet system. Every time the Mississippi rises the Bayou Gayoso overflows into the Wolf, contaminating the entire water supply of the city, and the people drink the water just the same. An epidemic is therefore augmented by a rise of the Mississippi.

Very little bedding, clothing, furniture, carpets, etc., used by yellow fever patients has been destroyed. Storeroom upon store-room is stacked with mattresses saturated with the poison of fever patients, and carpets, sofas and chairs stuffed with yellow fever germs. If the people were let alone they would use these filthy things. They have brought it all on themselves by deliberately preparing a pest-hole to live in. One would expect cleaner habits from savages than they have practised. The better class of negroes in the mule stables are the cleanest people of Memphis.

Pure earth, pure air, and pure water are the great sanitary requirements. Memphis gets plenty of pure air. The streets are broad, but there is pestilence in it because of the city's filth. The Wolf river water is among the best that has been analyzed, and if the water works were moved two or three miles up the river from their present position the city water supply would be pure always. The earth of Memphis is good clay and gravel, but every inch of ground under Memphis has been contaminated by its careless inhabitants. They want first of all, seven thousand brooms with which to sweep the cellars, streets, yards and alleys, and an adequate number of shovels, hoes and dirt carts to remove the sweepings, the inhabitants should be taught washing, scrubbing and cleaning as children are taught the alphabet. The street gutters should be put in order. They are now all of wood—except a few feet in isolated places—which is everywhere decayed and broken in, and many of the gutters are simply earth trenches two or three feet deep filled with filth, decomposing water, etc.

If the national board has in view an epidemic will not revisit Memphis. It is decided definitely to stamp it out. The national board will recommend in its report the Waring system of sewerage and drainage which is doubtless the best, cheapest and simplest for a small city; and least likely to get out of order, and this system, at a cost of \$250,000, will probably be put into Memphis. They cannot easily get this system out of order, and we know that they would destroy in a short time anything which could be injured. The whole cost of cleansing and redeeming the city will be \$1,000,000, and the United States can and will do the work by spring. The investigations are completed. The cleansing work will begin as soon as the cold weather sets in. At Memphis there is yellow fever the year round. They had a dozen cases in six days, while I was there that they did not report. Even when frost is in the ground, if you close up a building and light a fire you will get disease, because it is in the houses. The air of the place now is likely to make intermittent fever, measles, small-pox, scarlet fever, malarial fever, or any disease epidemic. If you put a spark of any disease into the place it will flash it over the city like fire on a prairie.

CONTAGIOUS FEVERS

In view of the prevalence of contagious fevers at this season of the year, we give the following excerpts from an excellent article in *The Nineteenth Century*, for November, on the subject "Is Typhoid Fever Contagious?" by Dr. T. J. MacLagan. There is inevitably a great similarity in the treatment of transmissible diseases to prevent their communication to others, and the suggestions here given will therefore be found to be of the greatest service in this respect. As the transmissibility of epidemic yellow fever through various agencies is now well known it is clear that the advice given by Dr. MacLagan will be found of the highest value in the treatment of that dangerous disease.

Typhoid fever is one of the most common of the serious ailments of civilised life. No household is safe against it; there is no family which it may not invade. In Great Britain alone not much short of 200,000 persons suffer from it every year. Of these nearly 20,000 die, most of them in the prime of life. It is even more prevalent on the Continent.

The question of the contagiousness of such a disease is one of vital importance; and yet it is one of which the most antagonistic opinions are held.

Among the many ailments which may be transmitted from the sick to the healthy, the ones with which we are most familiar in this country, are those which are grouped together under the name of "the eruptive." To this group typhoid fever belongs. It includes also small-pox, typhus fever, scarlet fever, and measles. Each consists of an attack of more or less definite duration, and of a local inflammation or eruption: during the course of each its poison is largely reproduced in the system; and each may be transmitted from the sick to the healthy.

There are several ways in which a disease may be transmitted.

1. Its poison may be introduced directly by inoculation, as is daily done in the case of vaccination.

2. It may pass directly into the surrounding atmosphere from the persons of the sick, and be inhaled by those in their neighbourhood, as constantly happens in small-pox, typhus fever, measles, and scarlet fever.

3. It may be conveyed indirectly, by contact with the person who is the source of the poison.

happens in the same diseases. Or it may be conveyed in food or water, and enter the system through the digestive organs, as frequently happens with the poison of typhoid fever.

Contagion consists physically of minute solid particles. The process of contagion consists in the passage of these from the bodies of the sick into the surrounding atmosphere, and in the inhalation of them by those in the immediate neighbourhood. If contagion were a gaseous or vapour emanation, it would be easily diffused through the sick-room, and all who entered it would, if susceptible, suffer alike and inevitably. But such is not the case; for many people are exposed for weeks and months without suffering. Of two persons situated in exactly the same circumstances, and exposed in exactly the same degree to a given contagion, one may suffer, and the other escape. The explanation of this is that the little particles of contagion are irregularly scattered about in the atmosphere, so that the inhalation of one or more of them is purely a matter of chance, such chance bearing a direct relation to the number of particles which exist in a given cubic space. Suppose that a hundred germs are floating about in a room containing two thousand cubic feet of air. There is one germ for every twenty cubic feet. Naturally the germs will be most numerous in the immediate neighbourhood of their source, the person of the sufferer; but, excepting this one place, they may be pretty equally distributed through the room; or they may be very unequally distributed. A draught across the bed may carry them now to one side, now to the other. The mass of them may be near the ceiling, or near the floor. In a given twenty cubic feet, there may be a dozen germs, or there may be none at all. One who enters the room may inhale a germ before he has been in it ten minutes; or he may remain there for an hour without doing so. Double the number of germs and you double the danger. Diminish the size of the room by one half, and you do the same. Keep the windows shut, and you keep the germs in; open them, and they pass out with the changing air. Hence the importance of free ventilation; and hence one reason why fever should be treated, if possible, in large airy rooms. Not only is free ventilation good for the sufferer, but it diminishes the risk to the attendants.

We see in this, too, the reason for banishing bed-curtains, carpets, and all unnecessary furniture from the sick room in cases of contagious fever. The germs are apt to adhere to such articles, and so make them the means of conveying the disease to others. The contagiousness of a given eruptive fever must be directly as the number of germs which, in a given time, pass from the body of a sufferer into the surrounding atmosphere. This, in its turn, must depend on the seat of the propagation of the poison, and on the relation which this bears to that atmosphere. In small-pox, scarlet fever, typhus fever, and measles, the seat of this propagation is the skin and mucous membrane of the air-passages; it is, therefore, in direct, free and constant communication with the external air. The poisons of these diseases are accordingly freely given off into the atmosphere of the room in which the sufferer is, and they themselves are highly contagious.

In typhoid fever, the poison is propagated in the bowel, and is thrown off with the discharges from it. It thus passes from the system in a manner, and in a combination, which ensure its speedy removal from the neighbourhood of the sufferer. The typhoid germs are there; but they are mingled with discharges which may be removed, and as matter of course are removed, before the germs can pass off from them into the surrounding atmosphere. The seat of the propagation of the typhoid poison has no direct contact with the external air. The poisons of these diseases are accordingly given off into the atmosphere of the room, when one case of typhoid fever may give rise to many others. The occurrence of a case of typhoid fever in a house is a sharp test of the efficiency of its sanitary arrangements. If these are perfect, and the stools properly managed, all will go well; if they are defective, one case may give rise to many others. But the communication of the disease is not direct, by contact; it is indirect, by infection of drinking water, or of an atmosphere which may be remote from the person who is the source of the poison.

On this view of the nature and mode of action of contagion, it is easy to see, not only how the process of contagion and its varying phenomena may be explained, but how, by care, much may be done both to prevent the poison from passing into the atmosphere, and to diminish its chance of acting after it has got there. We have only to consider what is the chief channel by which the contagion gets exit from the system, to know by what means we are most likely to prevent its passing into the surrounding atmosphere. In typhoid fever the poison passes off in the stools; and what we have to do is to see that these are promptly and properly disinfected and disposed of. In small-pox, scarlet fever, typhus fever, and measles, it is eliminated by the skin, and we cannot altogether prevent its getting into the atmosphere; but by frequent sponging with some disinfecting fluid, or even with plain water, many germs may be arrested in their outward course.

The apostolic method of anointing with oil is also an efficacious way of living and arresting the germs; it is specially useful during convalescence from scarlet fever in fixing the particles of peeling skin, which are a source of much danger. They contain the germs which have been produced in them. What we see happen in the larger particles of skin happens also in many of the much smaller particles of contagion.

By the adoption of these various measures, by rigorously isolating the sufferer, and by having the room well ventilated, much, very much in it is done to check the spread of contagious fevers. The matter of which organisms are composed is one of the most perishable things in nature. Contact is the exception to the rule. By exposure to the air much of it is destroyed; hence such exposure is one of the best of all disinfectants. For one germ that comes to maturity, thousands perish. It is the same throughout Nature; for one rose seed that develops into a rose tree, for one onion that develops into an animal, many thousands die. In her arrangements for ensuring the continuance of a species, Nature is almost invariably lavish. In her arrangements for keeping its numbers within proper bounds, she is equally provident.

THE TEA AND COFFEE TAX.

The figures in regard to the repeal of the tea and coffee tax sent to the United States Congress, during its December session, by Secretary Sherman, show that with regard to tea during the years 1870, 1871 and 1872 the average value of this article varied from 30 to 30½ cents per pound. The rate of duty varied from 15 to 25 cents per pound, and the revenue received varied from \$3,000,000 to \$10,000,000 annually. During the calendar years from 1873 to 1875 inclusive, when the article was imported duty free, its average value varied annually from 24 to 35½ cents per pound, and the estimated revenue which would have been received by the government on the basis of former rates of duties would have been from \$8,000,000 to \$10,000,000 annually.

With regard to coffee, the average value during 1870, 1871 and 1872 varied from 10 to 15 cents per pound. The rate of duty varied from 10 to 15 cents per pound, and the revenue received varied from \$5,500,000 to \$10,500,000 annually. From 1873 to 1875 inclusive, when coffee was imported duty free, its average value varied from 12 to 16½ cents; and the estimated amount of duties which would have been received under rates of former years varies from \$8,500,000 to \$12,000,000 annually. It is seen therefore that the government lost some \$22,000,000 a year by the repeal of the tax, and that the price of the two articles increased instead of going down. The secretary recommends the re-imposition of a moderate rate of duty, a recommendation which is cordially supported by the press of the country.

IMMIGRATION STATISTICS.—The return of the United States commissioners of emigration show that for the year ending December 31, 1870, there were landed at Castle Garden a total of 175,380 immigrants, of whom 135,074 were aliens. In 1871 the total arrivals numbered 121,336, of whom 74,347 were aliens. During the month of December last there were landed at Castle Garden 9,041 immigrants, against 5,320 during the same month in 1872. The labor bureau during the just year provided employment for 11,012 males, and 5,517 females, the former including 1,459 mechanics and 6,685 agricultural and other laborers. In 1878 the number who procured employment amounted to 5,693 males and 4,615 females. The principal nationalities of the immigrants who arrived last year were: Germany, 33,374; Ireland, 22,024; England, 21,355; Sweden, 12,394; Italy, 7,222; Scotland, 6,087; Norway, 4,037; Switzerland, 4,653; Russia, 3,403; France, 2,331.

During the year 1878 there were 7,500 miles of railway in operation in the United States, which paid \$3,629,366 dollars in dividends.

PROVINCIAL NOTES

A large hotel is now under construction at Desterro, Santa Catharina.

A balance of \$10,230,191 is said to be in the provincial treasury of the Amazonas.

The preliminary session of the provincial assembly of São Paulo took place on the 27th ult.

The present number of convicts on the island of Fernando de Noronha is 1,726. The total population of the island is 2,554.

The total number of cattle received at the slaughter-houses of Pribas, Rio Grande do Sul, up to the close of the 21st ult. was 39,179 head.

Up to the 15th ult. of the present season, 46,762 head of cattle had been killed in the slaughter-houses of Montevideo.

The receipts of the Manaus custom house for December were 10,774,256, and of the collector's office 117,766,579.

Advices from Mato Grosso state that the new import of 5 per cent. on official salaries of 1,000 and upwards, has caused great discontent in that province.

It is reported that the Italian government intends to select the port of Desterro, Santa Catharina, as the headquarters of its South Atlantic squadron.

The sanitary state of Chapada, Maranhão, is reported very bad. The people are suffering greatly from want, and from malarial and typhoid fevers.

Condeine José Antônio Saniya arrived at Bahia from Europa on the 27th ult. whilst he was during the last session of the General Assembly for the recovery of his health.

A road is being cut through the island of Arvoredo, on the northern frontier of Santa Catharina, from the landing place to the locality selected for a new lighthouse.

A letter to the *Jornal do Comércio* from Paulista do Rio, dated January 14, says that the river still continues with great river and that the people are enduring great hardships.

Samples of copper have been sent to this city from the auriferous mines in Mato Grosso. The mines are said to be very extensive, but the report should be received with some allowance until a competent survey can be made.

In the interior towns of Rio Grande do Sul there are published twenty newspapers. In Porto Alegre there are five daily papers, in Rio Grande five, and in Pelotas three, besides several weekly papers.

A woman named Janaria, a slave of Sr. Ignacio José Coimbra de Aguiar, parson of Cano Grande, was killed by a thunderbolt in the 26th ult. She was standing at a window, and was killed instantly.

The *Correio do Cintagalo*, of the 26th ult., relates that a刷子 party took place there on the 5th between two men named Mariano and Reis. It resulted in a wound for Mariano and death for Reis.

A party of Ceará refugees created a disturbance in Pirenópolis, Maranhão, on the 15th and 16th of December last. After parading the streets of the town, armed with knives, clubs, etc., they were finally driven away.

—José Elias and Manuel Simões, of Paraíba, got into a quarrel one day last month. José then went to the delegacy of Guyana and gave information that he had assisted the said Mariano in several robberies, and in killing an Italian.

The officer in command of the Mato Grosso frontier has been authorized to raise a force of militia for frontier guards. They will be enlisted for a time not less than one year and will be stationed along the right bank of the Rio Apa, the boundary between Paraguay and Mato Grosso.

On the morning of the 28th ult. Sr. Francisco de Paula Cavalcante de Alhambra, Visconde de Sussuam, senator from the province of Pernambuco, died at his home in Bahia after an illness of some duration. He was the oldest member of the Senate at the time of his death, having been appointed by a imperial decree dated October 29, 1839.

Two laborers, Joaquim José de Oliveira and Antônio Matheus da Silveira, got into a quarrel at Cadêncio, Rio Grande do Sul, on the 4th ult. Antônio had a large knife with which he attacked Joaquim, inflicting a fatal wound. The latter succeeded in killing his antagonist down with a whip handle and then, getting possession of the knife, killed him with it. Joaquim died four hours later.

According to the *Correio de Victoria*, Espírito Santo, Captain Antônio Matheus de Araújo Nico was killed on the 28th ult. by a shot from an amboyna. The murder took place at a place called Petragem, in the parish of S. José do Quinciano. The police proceeded to the place where the crime was committed and succeeded in capturing one José Pinto de Moraes who afterwards died his guilt.

According to the *Chronicle of Bahia* of the 26th ult., the small boat, *Gulha Gata*, with which two adventurous Americans, H. B. Brown and A. B. Cox, are trying to reach Australia, arrived at Assu da Terra on the afternoon of the 16th ult. The *Gulha Gata* left Santos, Cape Verde, on the 17th of September, but through contrary winds and seas it was driven across the Atlantic to the Brazilian coast. The two men are said to have had no other food during the twenty-five days previous to their landing at Assu but the sole of a slipper. They were unable to walk through exhaustion. They arrived at Bahia on the 27th and were properly cared for by the American consul.

RAILROAD NOTES.

A concession has been granted to Mr. Charles Albert Moisng for a railway line running from Botafogo down the coast of Angra dos Reis. The line is to pass through Guaratiba, Iguape, and Santa Cruz.

The receipts of the "Panisula" railway during the month of November last were 275,057\$810, expenses 67,294\$154, balance 207,763\$656. The excess of receipts over expenses from July 1, to November 30 amounted to 721,872\$573.

A telegram from Pernambuco to the *Chronico* says the receipts for the passages of the Recife e São Francisco road have decreased very sensibly since the impost law went into effect. Many of the passengers who formerly traveled first class now go as second class.

The receipts of the Baturité railway in November last were 25,453\$775 and the expenses 13,160\$65, not including 12,620\$686 incurred in the great line of portage of goods, and 495\$155 incurred in transporting material for the extension of the line.

The southern railway line of "Olhão e Bela," Pernambuco, received 171,262\$080 during the year 1879, expended 122,533\$090, balance remaining 48,728\$190. The traffic for the year amounted to 901,661½ passengers, 608 tons of baggage, and 430 tons of merchandise.

Four vessels have left Rioverde with rails and plant for the Paulo Afonso road. Of these one was bound on the 7th on the Dom Rodrigo route on the coast of the province of Alagoas. The ship and cargo were saved. Two others have reached the mouth of the São Francisco river, and the fourth remains to be heard from.

Contracts were signed on the 12th ult. by the president of São Paulo and Col. Joaquim Osvaldo Sárvia de Carvalho for the construction of two railroads—one running from Laranjeiras to Inháia, Minas Gerais; the other from São Paulo to Piracicaba, on the Dom Pedro II line, to Alumbar, near Maranhão. The first has a concession for 90 years and the second for 50 years.

The London *Times* of Dec. 19 (weekly col.), has the following: "The Court of Appeals has refused to grant a new trial to Ray even though the action brought by Dr. Phillips against the London and South Western Railway and in whose favor a verdict of £16,000 has been returned on account of severe injuries sustained in a collision on that line."

During the month of December last the Dom Pedro II railway carried 256,182 passengers, 833 tons of baggage, 22,809½ tons of freight, and 4,477 tons of minerals. The total receipts were 950,062\$198.

During the same month of 1878 the railway carried 191,661½ passengers, 604½ tons of baggage, 23,681½ tons of freight, and 3,606 animals. The total receipts were 860,562\$73.

The provincial government of São Paulo has approved the plans of the first 12 kilometers of the Sorocaima railway prolongation from Itaembé to Boavista. It is said that the work of constructing this section will be begun in a few days. In compliance with the wishes of the people of Itaembé the board of directors of this company has resolved to make the preliminary surveys between Boavista and that place at an early date.

The receipts of the "Recife e São Paulo" railway for December were 127,480\$774, expenses 109,038\$154, balance to be applied toward interest 175,154\$146. The traffic amounted to 22,199 passengers, 139 tons of baggage, 10,043 tons of freight, and 508 animals. This includes 494 passengers and two tons of baggage transported on government account. The freight traffic included 7,679 tons of sugar and 6½ tons of cotton.

The receipts of the "Macau e Campos" railway during the six months ending December 31 were 697,250\$000; expenditures 352,208\$069; balance 339,129\$831. The number of passengers carried was 15,207; baggage 253½ tons; freight, 35,420 tons. The amount of coffee carried was 15,448½ tons, and of sugar 10,721 tons. The rates charged during the year averaged per kilogram per kilometer, 29 réis on baggage, 96 réis on coffee, 62½ réis on sugar, and 055½ réis on general freight.

A meeting of the shareholders of the São Paulo e Rio de Janeiro Railway Company was held in this city on the 31st ult. The purpose of the meeting was to ratify the acts of the meeting of October 10th relative to the removal of the seal of the company to the city of São Paulo which had been revoked by a subsequent meeting of a minority of the shareholders. After a protracted debate the acts of the meeting of October 10th were ratified by a vote of about three to one.

THE OFFICIAL ESTIMATES OF THE AMOUNT AND VALUE OF THE CROPS OF THE UNITED STATES FOR 1879 ARE AS FOLLOWS:

When, bushels Product Value
Corn, " 4,685,500 \$190,865,000
Oats, " 3,546,500 380,350,000
Rye, " 3,000,000 120,850,000
Barley, " 4,000,000 120,000,000
Buckwheat, " 23,145,650 23,864,488
Cotton, " 5,020,387 231,000,000
Potatoes, " 3,000,000 31,000,000
Petasites, " 35,648,000 35,831,880
Peaches, bushels 181,360,000 78,971,000

The total value of the crops mentioned was \$1,904,80,659; the total value of the same crops in 1878 was \$1,488,570,864. As this total does not include the value of the rice, sugar, fruits, and small crops, some of which as the fruit product amount to a very large sum, the total above given must be taken as largely below the actual value of all the agricultural products of the country. Adding these and the value of the wool, cloth, and the products of the dairy and stock farms, and it will be found that the one year's products largely exceed the national debt.

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AGENTS IN BRAZIL
RIO DE JANEIRO
HEAD OFFICE IN LONDON
BRANCHES:
RIO DE JANEIRO, PERNAMBUCO AND SANTOS
Capital 4,100,000
Res. paid up 500,000
Res. Reserve 1,000,000
Ditto, annual depreciation of capital 614,448.11

Draws on the London, São Paulo and banks and various descriptions of Banking business.

Railroad cars of every description, and of the best material. Steel cars of the most serviceable quality, and elegant designs. Special attention given to foreign work.

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